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ABSTRACT

Post-apartheid South Africa has been struggling with the question of how to restructure its institutions of higher education to both foster an equitable society and contribute to economic and technological development. Proponents of community colleges in the United States suggest that these institutions may best meet South Africa's needs. Community colleges or similar institutions have developed across the world and, despite differences in governance and mission, face similar challenges related to articulation with the indigenous educational system, quality control, and developing a mix of programs to meet both local and general needs. Changes in South Africa have made the nation ripe for educational reform, but the country's economic growth depends upon an educated workforce and the elimination of social barriers. The national Commission of Higher Education, formed in 1995, is seeking a centrally controlled governance system for the nation's higher education. Community colleges, however, are intended to be locally-steered institutions, responding to the market over state regulation and enjoying considerable autonomy. While community colleges may be able to provide the skills training needed by South Africa and help redress social inequities, care must be taken that they do not become additional tools for separating the countries ethnic groups. Community colleges should maintain high standards for both black and white students and operate under agreed-upon goals. Contains 40 references. (HAA)

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Are Community Colleges Right for South Africa?

James L. Ratcliff
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Are Community Colleges Right for South Africa

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Community colleges have been described as an "American invention" (Diener, 1986) and a "uniquely American institution" (Baker, 1994, p. xi). So, how closely wed is the community college concept to the social and political fabric of the country that spawned it? Community colleges operate in a number of countries today, so it would seem that the institution can and has been successfully transplanted to other countries, cultures, and social contexts. But community colleges have not been adopted or adapted in every country. Are some countries "ahead" of others, as some community college advocates would suggest, or are community colleges more amenable to certain social, cultural, and governmental environments in which higher education (broadly conceived) operates? This chapter examines the question within the rapidly changing context of the Republic of South Africa.

Post-apartheid South Africa has been struggling with the larger question of how to restructure its institutions of higher education to foster an equitable society as well as to contribute to its economic and technological development. The debate regarding the appropriateness of community colleges for South Africa comes within the larger context of remaking the postsecondary system and the society at large. Drawing upon the proponents of community colleges in the United States, Strydom and colleagues (1995) suggest that South Africa's long-term need to redress the country's educational disparities may be best met by community colleges. While the profound education problems generated from the prior era of apartheid may be resolved in the short-term by using

existing educational structures to create separate courses or curricula, a longer term solution would be to create a system of community colleges. Fisher (1994) examined the critics of community colleges (Dougherty, 1991; Orfield and Paul, 1992), to assert that "university-based programmes may be more likely than programmes located in a separate community college system to lead to improved higher education access for non-traditional, disadvantaged students" in South Africa (p. 16). Fisher (1994) concludes,

> We should ***not***, I would argue, see intermediate institutions as the main bridges to university for black students, or as providers of university-level courses. It would be far more appropriate to see such institutions as part of an expanded, flexible, high quality intermediate education system providing much-needed bridges to the workplace and to community development, and a ***step up*** to university admission for those who cannot enter higher education directly (p. 18).

Should there be community colleges in South Africa? Should they be primarily vocational and technical? Should they principally provide developmental and remedial education? Should they offer the first years of university studies? Or should they follow the American prototype of being comprehensive in mission and program, attempting to provide all things for all people? In addressing these questions, we claim no privileged connection to South African policy makers or documents. We are Americans, not South Africans, and have embarked on this analysis at the invitation of the Unit for Research into Higher Education of the University of the Orange Free State, and write primarily from our familiarity with American community colleges.

Global Developments in Non-Traditional Postsecondary Education

Governments and independent organizations throughout the world have established various non-traditional, or non-university, forms of postsecondary education. Such institutions often

founded to educate people who are beyond the age or grade level of the public schooling system and who are not served by universities. Non-university forms of postsecondary education can be compared to the American community colleges in terms of how well they serve the people and communities or regions they were intended to benefit. Vocational and technical education, for instance, are major segments of the curriculum in many of these institutions. Community and junior colleges in China and Japan, for example, are terminal institutions providing general, short-term postsecondary education. They differ significantly from American community colleges in admissions policy, governance, and control. Institutions providing programs and services similar to American community colleges operate under a variety of names. In Malaysia, Mexico, and South Africa, the non-university sectors includes teknologi, polytechnical institutes, and tecknikons. In Germany and Austria, there are fachhochschulen. In Norway, Israel, and Ireland, there are systems of regional colleges. These institutions are not community colleges but serve some similar roles and offer some parallel programs to those found in American community colleges (Cohen, 1995).

Despite differences in role, mission, governance, and social context, community colleges around the world share some common issues and challenges in functioning effectively within their indigenous educational system, including articulation and student mobility within the system; quality assurance mechanisms pertaining to knowledge attainment and competence of exiting students; providing bridging programs between the secondary education and the workforce to enable students without the prerequisite knowledge and skills to succeed at the postsecondary level to gain them; deciding on the relative mix programs and services designed specifically for local or regional needs and services to the larger educational and political priorities of the country; addressing high graduate unemployment rates and workforce needs; and being charged with a primary role at the

postsecondary level for carrying out a social equality agenda.

Countries that do not have postsecondary institutions comparable to the American community college may be faced with the need to implement community colleges or similar institutions. In Australia, for example, the high demand for skill-based programs led states there to establish short-cycle postsecondary institutions in Tertiary and Advanced Further Education (TAFE). In South America, community colleges are more likely to be administered as branches of polytechnic universities. In New Zealand, community colleges are part of the country's polytechnic and technical institutes (Kintzer, 1990).

Cohen has asserted "the world-wide expansion of post-compulsory, non-university education will continue as national development, technical changes in the workplace, and rising demand for further education focus on this sector" (1995, p. 73). The demand for postsecondary education continues to grow and to grow more diverse. Business, industry, and labor have been far more interested and involved in the public discourse regarding the direction of postsecondary education. The prospect for expansion of the community college sector has great appeal because of the world-wide demand for a variety of non-university postsecondary education programs at a reasonable cost by people who are past the age of compulsory schooling (Brawer, 1996).

Changes in South Africa

Changes in South Africa due to the end of apartheid have made the nation ripe for educational reform. The end of apartheid opened the prospect of participation in the full range of employment, schooling, social, economic, technological, and political opportunities for all South Africans. Ending apartheid also remove the economic sanctions several countries had placed on South Africa and

resubmitted the nation to increased global opportunities and economic competition.

During the 1970s, there were fifteen universities in South Africa. They provided higher education taught in different languages and served one primary race and language group, except for the University of South Africa (UNISA) which offered education to all through distance education and correspondence study. There were three historically-black universities (one for each of the major language groups), one for coloreds (mixed race peoples, Indians) and one for Asians (Robertson & Robertson, 1977). Past and present differences between educational opportunities among races has a tremendous impact on the future of the new post-independence South Africa. Those differences reside primarily in the lack of adequate elementary and secondary schooling for black and mixed race South Africans. The disparity in elementary and secondary education telegraphs to disparities in postsecondary education as well. Other nations will examine the way South Africa approaches educational reform as they make decisions about whether or not to invest in the future of South African society.

South Africa is a country wealthy with natural resources, and there are many predictions for positive economic growth, but these are dependent on an educated workforce (Robertson, 1995). Some of the legislation which has been repealed since the elimination of apartheid include the Land Acts which restricted 87% of the Black/African population to 13% of the land; the Group Areas Act assigning the Blacks who worked in White areas to specific areas where they could temporarily live; the Population Registration Act with racial identity cards for each citizen; and the Job Reservation Act fixing limits of jobs for non-white citizens (Robertson, 1995, p. 105). Despite these legislative changes, race differences remain great. Language, which is representative of cultural differences in any country, is an especially emotionally-charged issue in South Africa. Language differences pose

both practical difficulties in teaching, and personal concerns in the values and ideologies various languages represent. This country has a total of twenty languages (Robertson & Robertson, 1977, p. 29). There is a government policy that says each child must be instructed in his or her native language, but must also develop competencies in English and Afrikaans. These languages have been taught by assigning each to different subjects. English is the traditional language for practical subjects, and Afrikaans for mathematics and the social and physical sciences (Robertson & Robertson, 1977, pp. 31-32). The problem in South Africa is not language, race, or class, but the complex and changing power relationships between multiple identities such as gender, race, class, and educational achievement in combination (Jansen, 1991, p. 7).

The many years of inequality and internal struggles have isolated South African academics and researchers from international exchange of information and ideas. The universities of the developed world (i.e., OECD nations) have a monopoly on resources. This includes the publication of scholarly journals, international publishing houses for books and monographs, research funding agencies, research centers, large library holdings, and research institutions. Third world nations are currently intellectually dependent on the powerful core nations (Jansen, 1991). South Africa would like to improve its positioning among other nations in both numbers of educated citizens and the level of scholarship.

South African interest in community colleges

While all students in South Africa now have legally equal access to higher education, the universities argue that this legal principal is not true in practice. Educational divisions still exist due to the idea of separate development of institutions for different racial and language groups

characteristic of apartheid. These divisions continue to assure that each individual is defined and prepared for his or her predetermined position in society based on color. (Robertson & Robertson, 1977).

South Africa is trying to expand and improve educational opportunities for non-whites. Mwabu and Schultz (1996) say that maximizing private returns to schooling would require expanding higher education and secondary education to the African people. This would benefit the disadvantaged racial group and reduce racial inequity. Further separate development may not be in the best interests for further development of the country. Economic growth in South Africa necessitates an increase in skilled workers which cannot be met under the present arrangement. Racially disadvantaged citizens are not currently educated at a level adequate to fill the need.

This lack of an educated citizenry is not only due to the pre-existing inequities in higher education, but also because of an abnormally high dropout rate in secondary schools particularly among blacks (Robertson & Robertson, 1977). The amount of black citizens that need remedial education is phenomenal. It was estimated in March of 1991 that 78% of Africans, 55% of Coloreds, 23% of Asians, and 2% of Whites were illiterate. Part of this is because of the high drop-out rate. Approximately 71% of African students dropped out before they finished seventh grade. Only 8% of African students enrolled in their final year of high school obtained a matriculation exemption to enter the university (Robertson, 1995, p. 108). In order to matriculate to the universities, these students need more than what is currently available within the current system of higher education currently in South Africa.

Many also say there is a shortage of skilled workers in key areas of economic growth and competitiveness in South Africa. Not only would it be socially unacceptable to fill these shortages

with whites alone, these shortages simply cannot be met by the indigenous white population or by the current rate of white immigration. For economic growth to be maintained other races (especially blacks) must be educated (Chishom, 1984, p. 391). Skilled wage earning places have traditionally been occupied by whites and unskilled manual jobs have been held by blacks. For international competitiveness, South Africa now needs laborers who are motivated, efficient, and stable as well as trained in basic skills. These human attributes and attitudes are best taught and encouraged in a non-traditional postsecondary education setting.

The institutions currently training semi-skilled laborers have been generating specific job skills without the desired accompanying dispositions. Attitude and pride in work are more difficult to teach on the job or in a vocational setting where the emphasis is solely on the skill and not the development of the person as a whole (Chishom, 1984, p. 394). Meeting certain agreed-upon qualifications for a job may indicate whether an individual is capable of performing needed skills, but says nothing about potential productivity, commitment, or proficiency (Randall, 1993). During his 1981 inaugural address, Dr. Stuart J. Saunders, Principal of the University of Cape Town, called for the establishment of community colleges to bridge the gap between school, and the university, for under-prepared students (Marcum, 1982, p. 163). This would be a place for the school leaver, most of which are black, to return at a later date and proceed with a course of study on a level higher than what is currently available through vocational training. It would give black and mixed race school leavers an opportunity to prepare to compete for a university degree, and to be judged by the same entrance criteria as their white counterparts. It would also socialize a new generation of young people to a mentality conducive for maintaining productivity.

Although South African universities are supposedly "open" to all, they are unable to serve

everyone because of the high student demand. Community colleges could fill this void. Modeled after those in the United States, they could serve the overflow of students. Another endorsement for the United States style community college comes from those who see the need for an educational institution that functions both day and night and is non-residential. These institutions provide both terminal and preparatory two-year programs. Community colleges are also good places to train people who do not particularly want a degree but who desire to update skills. The kinds of training needed in South Africa are those that have been successfully offered at U.S. community colleges: technology, commerce, nursing, and teacher training and improvement (Marcum, 1982).

Economic development depends on international cooperation. Future jobs for students have not been given significant amounts of consideration. One critical component to education in South Africa may be the development of human resources in relation to future employment needs of the nation. The jobs that will need to be filled must be considered in the implementation of any educational reform so the instruction matches the nation's needs. Educational leaders wish to consider both short-term issues and long-term issues in their efforts to reform the country's educational structure (Robertson, 1995).

South Africa's national Commission on Higher Education was appointed by President Nelson Mandela in January of 1995 (Loxton, 1996a). This Commission recommended that postsecondary enrollment double over the next decade. The recommended emphasis is to be on practical training to meet the needs of the economy (Loxton, 1996a). But there are difficulties in changing the imbalance inherited from the apartheid era.

Current South African government policy seeks to develop is a single system of governance for all of higher education. Such a centrally planned and controlled system would replace the current

fragmented systems they have now and which they have inherited from the past. Educational leaders envision a goal-oriented system which matches funds to opportunities providing students with the skills the nation needs (Loxton, 1996b.) Unfortunately, South Africa's economy has been weakened due to the lack of skilled workers. New approaches to financial aid are presently under consideration, keeping in mind the economic concerns and limitations of the nation. The Commission is expected to issue a report on financial aid soon. Students may challenge this report because it does not reflect the suggestions they made, in either financial aid or in curricular reform.

The Commission wishes to move away from the pre-existing elite system of higher education and move toward what they call "massification" or a mass system of postsecondary institutions. The nation may expect changes in the way institutions are structured, funded, planned, and governed in order to compete on a global market (Loxton, 1996a). Specialized institutions may merge into one single system. The Department of Education envisions the establishment of one branch dedicated specifically to higher education. Continuing education will also be increased. Consolidating South Africa's well-established distance education program into a single major institution is another possibility (Loxton, 1996a). One positive step toward reform was the recent legislation mandating "ten years free and compulsory education" (Robertson, 1995, p. 111). More representative "institutional forums" are in planning stages. Democratic order based on equal opportunity and justice is the goal. But can American-style community colleges be established successfully within the context of proposed central planning and control and within the social, economic political context of today's South Africa?

Community Colleges and Higher Education Coordination

Community colleges are designed to provide postsecondary programs locally and regionally. Proponents point to those institutions with a lay local or regional board of directors, with career programs and services tailored to local labor and industrial training and workforce needs, with university-preparatory and university-transfer courses of students, and with programs and services for adult students. Community colleges often offer courses at the lowest cost among the various forms of postsecondary education, and they pride themselves on their flexibility -- the capacity to add programs and services when demands warrant. Community colleges are intended to be locally-steered institutions with a mix of curriculum and services responsive to constituents of the immediate area.

Contemporary Constraints on Postsecondary Education

Such institutions seem appropriate to the times. The once popular view that the expansion of higher education is a major precursor to further technological and economic growth is no longer a rallying cry. While enrollments in postsecondary education have increased dramatically in both the developing and developed nations, the capacity to finance such expansion has not kept pace. Across sub-Sahara Africa in the 30 years from 1950 to 1980, enrollments increased six fold (Psacharoplous, 1991). Across the continent, the national capacity to finance all forms of education declined as economic output waned (Blair, 1992). Africa was not alone in what was a worldwide trend. For example, Kowarsky (1994) examined what she dubbed as a policy paradox in the state of California: the state master plan worked to encourage all Californians to get a college or university education, yet the state's economy failed to keep up with the demand for higher education enabled by the master plan policies. While community colleges may have some appeal for their low cost and their local

community responsiveness, the overall trend is away from further funding for the expanding of higher education, and there is an increasing suspicion on the part of policy makers that postsecondary programs do not promulgate commensurate increases in economic development or technical expertise.

The effects of rapid enrollment increases in the face of declining resources has been a degrading of the quality of teaching and research as a result of overcrowding, inadequate staffing, deteriorating physical facilities, poor library resources and insufficient equipment (4, 1991). While white institutions in the apartheid period were less susceptible to these pressures, now the paucity of resources is spread to all forms of institutions. Such circumstances, while not uniform across institutions in South Africa, and certainly less pronounced than in its neighboring countries, nonetheless are observable. Within this context, certain institutions have significant problems with internal efficiency. Low enrollments in some programs and overcrowding and high drop-out rates in others suggests the need for authority at the local level. Structural problems also plague the postsecondary sector. Graduates may be unemployed or underemployed. Also, in many developing countries, student revolts accompany political turmoil and contribute to policy makers' suspicions that postsecondary education can be a destabilizing force (Altbach, 1989).

Government policies to encourage postsecondary enrollment are not easily changed. Changing or limiting policies regarding open admissions, free education, and job guarantee are undertaken cautiously in countries such as Kenya and Nigeria where such principles were established during the decades of nation-building in the 1960s and 1970s. Such pressures define the ways that national governments in these countries try to steer postsecondary education. Decisions regarding the budget for public postsecondary education, enrollments policies, and monitoring of expenditures

has usually occurred in the appropriate ministry office at the national level. The press is for central steerage of postsecondary programs, and this in turn has a major impact on the dynamics of educational reform.

The Role of Government Regulation

The desire to control postsecondary education centrally would seem to work against government interest in or advocacy of the establishment of locally-based institutions. The effects of government regulation on the structure and functioning of postsecondary education has been studies by Cerych and Sabatier (1986), van Vught (1989), and Neave and van Vught (1991). Craig (1990) and Vespoor (1989) have written specifically to the impace of government regulation on postsecondary education within the region of sub-Sahara Africa.

The extent to which the national government perceives it to be desirable to control the provision of education centrally impacts the appropriateness of the proposal that a system of community colleges be established. Government regulation is

> ... a framework of rules within which other decision units can make decisions without the high transaction costs of maintaining force for the purpose of protecting their belongings or of maintaining threats to enforce the carrying out of agreed upon contracts. As a framework, the government simply delineates the boundaries within which other units determine choices, the government making its own forces available to defend the established boundaries" (Sowell, 1980, p. 145).

Two-year local colleges began in the United States as negotiated local arrangements. The provision of postsecondary programs was negotiated between local high schools, the nearby state university, and the municipal authorities. Often the enabling legislation followed the establishment of first junior colleges rather than preceding it (Ratcliff, 1984, 1986, 1987). As the number of community requests to establish two-year colleges grew, states passed legislation enabling systems of two-year institutions

to be created. Only in the 1960s as a result of federal (national) government legislation was the impetus to establish whole systems of community colleges with a coordinating or governing state authority widely adopted. The increased transactions between schools, colleges, and university brought on the systematic planning of systems of community college within state postsecondary education.

Regulations seek to control behavior. Regulations try to steer people's actions and decisions according to specified aims and through specific instruments or institutions. Regulation is "the intentional restriction of a subject's choice of activity by an entity not directly party to or involved in that activity" (Mitnick, 1980, p. 5). Governments usually regulate for three reasons: to gain efficiency (over perceived market weaknesses), to direct distribution of public resources, and to protect social or cultural aims of established policy (Skolnik, 1987). South African educators' concern about regulation focuses on identifying "sound rationales for organizing centralized and decentralized structures and functions" (Lindsay & Zath, 1994, p. 474). The balance of authority and control between centralized and decentralized structures, and the various functions of the newly defined government, have yet to be detailed. Only through further open dialogue will these issues be resolved.

Government regulation of postsecondary education can be examined to determine what pattern(s) of decision-making are appropriate given the specific social and political context in which they will be used. Creation and government of public units of postsecondary education, be they community colleges or other non-university entities, can be assessed according to the needs and constraints presented by the indigenous current affairs. Certain focal points for the analysis include the level of consensus desired between the units for them to function, the authority of one or several

of the units to enforce certain choices, and the balance of costs and benefits ascribed to the various units (Neave & van Vught, 1994). Thus, litmus questions involved such issues as: How prepared are the universities or the major employers to accept graduates of community colleges? Who and how are the articulation of credit and the recognition for work completed recognized (from elementary and secondary schools to the community colleges and from the community college to the university)? What is the impact of money not spent on universities and tecknikons (and now spent on community colleges) on the postsecondary educational system within South Africa?

Rational planning and control by central government presumes that the knowledge required to regulate is greatest and most available centrally. Control over the units to be regulated is assumed to be complete, and the image of the units to be regulated is generalized across the country. Thus, regulation of postsecondary education presumes that the best knowledge for steering the various institutions is greatest within the national ministry or department of education, that the regulation of colleges and universities supplants the need for local control and input, and that the image of universities or colleges is sufficiently generic that they can be regulated holistically or holistically within their respective postsecondary sectors (Neave & van Vught, 1994; van Vught, 1989).

Rational planning and control has been criticized as being based on unrealistic assumptions about people and organizations (Baldridge, 1971; Lindquist, 1976; van Vught, 1989). Central planning and control of postsecondary systems implicitly puts great confidence in bureaucrats and agencies to have the expertise, acquire the necessary information from across the system, and to make decisions that benefit the system. Rational planning and control makes government "an omniscient and omnipotent actor who thinks himself able to rightfully steer a part of society according to his own objectives' (van Vught, 1989, p. 37). Community colleges are designed to tap the knowledge,

interests, and direction of the locale and the region, and therefore represent a conscious choice away from central control and planning.

U. S. community colleges have struggled with finding equilibrium between state and local control for many years. Finding a manageable blend between central coordination and local control is complex. On one hand, state coordination can be effective in the areas of establishment and expansion, approval of new programs, acquisition of site and facilities, assistance in continued and ample financial support, adoption of general policies pertaining to students, and the development and extension of information systems (Wellman, 1978, p. 35). Darnowski (1978), however, expressed apprehension with state control in Connecticut, focused illustrating difficulties in enforcing and implementing shared planning, decision-making, and accountability. Control of local and immediate issues by people at a distance can cause delays in decision-making, confusion due to erroneous assumptions, and the absence of a feeling of ownership necessary to make informed decisions and follow through on their implementation.

The Market as a Coordinating Mechanism for Postsecondary Policy

The concept of the market as a coordinating force is fundamentally different from government regulation. When regulating, the government tries to be in charge; when relying on the market, the government seeks a minimal role in steerage. The market in its ideal form is a locus of interactions were no one is in charge and matters are settled by the circumstance and self-interest rather than broad social policy. Sowell states,

> The government is . . . an institution, but the market is nothing more than an option for each individual to choose among numerous existing institutions, or to fashion new arrangements suited to his own situation and taste (1980, p.

41).

In the marketplace, decisions are discretionary rather than structured. No effort is made to design, implement, or maintain a framework of rules, resources allocation, reporting, or communication. Government regulation, on the other hand, uses these policy levers to create a framework for government and non-governmental institutions to make decisions. Government regulation seeks to structure decision-making and to lessen the discretion of local leadership.

In examining matters of government control of postsecondary education, Clark's "triangle of coordination" is used as a heuristic for analysis (Clark, 1983a). The triangle consists of three central mechanisms of coordination: state authority, the market, and the academy. "State authority" may be regarded as synonymous with government regulation for the purposes of this discussion. "The Market" refers not only to the absence of institutions that regulate decisions and actions, but also to the role that student enrollment demand and the need for postsecondary-based research, training and development and the supply of postsecondary programs and services play in guiding institutional decision-making. The "academic oligarchy" refers to the coordinating capacities of groups of academics aligned according to fields of knowledge and expertise and linked through the medium of meetings, journals, a common knowledge base and modes of inquiry as communication avenues. These academics, in formal committees and councils, as well as in learned societies and professional associations, work together to influence and guide decisions made within the postsecondary system. Clark's triad of the state, the market, and the academy provides a mechanism for placing the steerage of systems of postsecondary education.

The Role of Autonomy in Coordination

Postsecondary institutions need to possess a certain degree of autonomy in order to fulfill their role in society (Neave and van Vught, 1994). As institutions go, they generally possess a very high degree of autonomy. Autonomy is often confused with academic freedom. Autonomy is different than academic freedom in that one is institutional and the other is individual. Academic freedom permits individual scholars to pursue new knowledge and to disseminate it through teaching and research without fear of punishment or termination of employment. Academic freedom may or may not be protected in an institution with great autonomy. The threat to academic freedom can come from local administrators as readily as from state bureaucrats.

Autonomy, as distinct from academic freedom, can be either substantive or procedural (Berdahl, 1990). Substantive autonomy is the freedom of the institution to set its own missions, goals, programs, and services. Many, but not all American community colleges possess substantive autonomy. Those encompassed in state systems may need to abide by statutorily defined mission, goals, and programs. Postsecondary institutions may also possess procedural autonomy, that is, the power to determine the means by which its goals will be pursued and its programs will be provided. Most American community colleges possess great procedural autonomy. The philosophy of comprehensive community colleges is one that presumes a great degree of procedural autonomy and may benefit from some extent of substantive autonomy as well. However, the very definition of community colleges as institutions providing a) the first two-years of the first degree, b) postsecondary vocational and technical education, c) adult and continuing education, d) precollegiate education, and e) career guidance and support services to a specified geographic region or metropolitan area provides a high degree of substantive control. Government has, in essence, defined the range of degrees, fields of study, and duration of study. When government regulation takes the

form of substantive control, the institutions tend to gain greater degrees of procedural autonomy (Neave and van Vught, 1994), as is the case of community colleges within American higher Education.

Given the move to statewide systems of community colleges in the U.S. during the 1960's, it is also important to distinguish between institutional autonomy and system autonomy with respect to government regulation. The advent of high degree of system-level governance in community colleges often affects institutional autonomy and institutional leaders' discretionary decision-making authority in a manner equally as profound as direct government intervention. Regardless of the level or dimension to which autonomy is ascribed, it is a central, potent, and prevalent construct in understanding the influence of the market as well as the government on postsecondary systems (Neave and van Vught, 1994). Autonomy directs how academic work is conducted. It provides a set of constraints within which authority is exercised within the institution and relations with external constituencies are established. Regardless of the agenda of the national government, the presence or absence of direct links with the postsecondary system, the government's civil service, and the degree of control exerted by the national government influence the suitability of different postsecondary institutions in serving the needs of the population.

Two basic models of postsecondary education can be discerned within the context of state control and governance. First is the state control model, based on European higher education's mix of state authority and the power of senior faculty internal to the institutions. Institutional autonomy is weak, and institutional leaders are often bypassed by system-wide decisions are made. The second is a market-driven model, of which American and British postsecondary systems are examples. Within that context, the American community college represents an open-access, non-traditional form

of postsecondary education compatible with the market-driven model of local control and governance.

Conclusion

Educational reform is a sensitive and fertile area . The desire for education and the frustration of certain groups trying to achieve it have been cause for bitterness. Recommendations for the reform of education, concerning both formal and non-formal approaches, are based on recommendations from the Technical and Vocational Education Subcommittee. When students reach the age where basic education is no longer free, they are channeled into either academic or vocational training. Academic schooling is paid for by parents while the costs of vocational training is absorbed by the government. Working class students have had little choice but to seek vocational training, while students better off financially received the academic schooling (Chishom, 1984). If reform is to work, precautions must be taken to assure the changes do not merely allow for further discrimination in new ways.

Community colleges similar to those in the United States could offer the skills training needed in the nation, prepare school leavers and educationally deficient students, provide career counseling and guidance, and offer short-term training and classes at various times of day within commuting distance of matriculants. Caution is needed, however, to assure these community colleges do not become another tool to separate class or race in South Africa. These schools should have black principals and black councils with no more government representation than white universities. They should be started by well-informed committees in order to avoid the same problems causing the black institutions to stagnate (Marcum, 1982). U.S. community colleges struggle with being all things to

all people. This approach, while it may sound like a good answer, may generate more questions and lead to further problems.

The term "excellence" is used in the new mission statement of the University of Cape Town. Some critics feel this word is exclusionary, and believe the term "equity" is a code for permitting lower standards. Black students must be held to the same high standards as their white counterparts in order for the equity to be real and not all talk (Loxton, 1996b). Community colleges can help prepare underrepresented students to be academically competitive with white students, but assurance is needed that black and mixed race students are judged by the same criteria as their white counterparts for acceptance to the university or the university degree will not mean the same for everyone.

Community colleges may assist South Africa in their competition on the global marketplace and earn international recognition among nations offering education structured similarly to make the most of all available workers, but caution is needed in order to avoid continued class and race discrimination, and to establish agreed-upon goals for these institutions. In the United States, community colleges have succeeded partially because they have been open choice institutions and not individually prescribed. Starting with a clean slate in short-term educational opportunities and recognizing the pitfalls, South Africa has the opportunity to develop a suitable system that will serve all citizens well.

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